

AMENDED
August 3, 2009, MB#51

Regular Session, August 3, 2009, 9:30 a.m.
Catawba County Board of Commissioners

Awards

NACo 2009 Achievement Award to Child Protective Services	401	08/03/09
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Emergency Services

PetFinder Grant for treating and testing for kennel cough	403	08/03/09
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Finance

Approve School Systems Resolutions for Qualified School Construction Bonds	402	08/03/09
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Presentations

NACo Award to Child Protective Services	401	08/03/09
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Public Hearings

Western Piedmont Transit Authority ROAP Grant Application	401	08/03/09
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Resolutions

NCDOT Abandonment of Harvel Road	402	08/03/09
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Western Piedmont Transit Authority

Public Hearing on ROAP Grant Application	401	08/03/09
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Streets/Road

NCDOT Abandonment of maintenance of Harvel Road	401	08/03/09
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Utilities and Engineering

Applications for Clean Renewable Energy and Qualified Energy Conservation Bonds	403	08/03/09
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The Catawba County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, August 3, 2009 at 9:30 a.m. in the 1924 Courthouse, Robert E. Hibbitts Meeting Room, 30 North College Avenue, Newton, North Carolina.

Present were Chair Katherine W. Barnes and Commissioners Dan A. Hunsucker, Glenn E. Barger and Barbara G. Beatty.

Vice-Chair Lynn M. Lail was absent.

Also present were County Manager J. Thomas Lundy, Assistant County Manager Lee Worsley, Assistant County Manager Dewey Harris, County Attorney Debra Bechtel, and County Clerk Barbara Morris. Deputy County Attorney Anne Marie Pease was absent.

1. Chair Katherine W. Barnes called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.
2. Commissioner Barbara G. Beatty led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
3. Chair Barnes offered the invocation.
4. After a clarification was made regarding a change to the draft minutes that had previously been forwarded to the Board regarding the sale of the Mt. View property, Commissioner Hunsucker made a motion to approve the minutes of July 20, 2009. The motion carried unanimously.
5. Recognition of Special Guests: The Board welcomed High School Intern Britany Taylor who was shadowing the County's legal staff and the Editor of the Hickory Daily Record, Larry Clark.

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6. Public Comments for Items not on the Agenda: None.
7. Presentations:
Chair Barnes presented Child Protective Services Supervisor Pam Brooks with a 2009 National Association of Counties (NACo) Achievement Award. The team was honored for creating a streamlined data compilation system to meet challenging new State requirements for the documenting of child protective services cases. The NACo Achievement Awards program, now in its 38th year, gives national recognition to significant and innovative programs that improve county organization, management and service delivery. Catawba County has won 187 awards over the history of the NACo program and has been honored during each of the program's 38 years.
8. Public Hearing:
Michael C. Bradshaw, Planning Manager for Western Piedmont Regional Transit Authority (WPTA), came forward and requested the Board hold a public hearing on a proposed application for a fiscal year 2009-2010 Rural Operating Assistance Program (ROAP) grant. Funds from this North Carolina Department of Transportation grant are used to provide public transportation for the residents of Catawba County. The grant includes funding for three programs: the Elderly and Disabled Transportation Assistance Program (EDTAP); Work First Transitional/Employment Transportation Assistance Program and Rural General Public (RGP) Program. EDTAP provides operating assistance funds for transportation of the elderly and persons with disabilities to allow these individuals to reside for a longer period in their homes, thereby enhancing their quality of life. The Work First/Employment program is intended to provide operating assistance for transitional Work First and general public employment transportation needs. RGP funds provide operating assistance for transportation services to individuals who are not human service agency clients.

The FY 2009-2010 Rural Operating Assistance Program allocation to Catawba County totals \$279,072. \$127,224 would go to the EDTAP program, \$29,610 to the Work First/Employment Program and \$122,238 would fund the RGP Program. EDTAP and Work First funding will be provided with 100% State funds and requires no local match. For the first time, \$6800 of the EDTAP funds are allocated to go directly to the Department of Social Services for socialization efforts for the elderly. The RGP Program is funded at 90% of the fully allocated cost of each general public trip. The remaining 10% RGP match is funded through the Western Piedmont Regional Transit Authority General Budget and fares.

Chair Barnes opened the public hearing. No one came forward to speak for or against the grant application. Chair Barnes then closed the public hearing and asked if the Board members had any questions. Commissioner Beatty asked if WPTA had addressed the needs of transportation to the Conover Farmers' Market and it was confirmed this had been address. Commissioner Barger then made a motion to approve the ROAP grant application. The motion carried unanimously.

9. Appointments: None.
10. Consent Agenda: None
11. Departmental Reports:
 - A. Planning
Planner Michael, Planner, came forward to request the Board adopt a resolution recommending the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) abandon maintenance of Harvel Road (State Road 1902). NCDOT requested the Board review and make a recommendation regarding the proposed abandonment. Under North Carolina General Statute 136-63, a Board of Commissioners may on its own motion, or on petition of a group of citizens, request that the North Carolina Board of Transportation change or abandon any road in the secondary system when the best interest of the people of the county will be served. NCDOT makes the final decision on the abandonment request.

Harvel Road is a gravel road that serves two properties that do not front onto NC Highway 150. There are two homes located on the parcels that are now owned by Duke Energy and are zoned General Industrial. One home is vacant and is scheduled to be demolished by Duke Energy. The

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other home was scheduled to be moved from the property on July 25, 2009. Due to the removal of the homes from the property, the request to remove this road from the State maintenance system will not adversely impact any adjacent property owners or deny any access to any property owner.

Duke Energy Carolinas, LLC currently owns all of the land served by Harvel Road with the exception of a small triangular piece of privately-owned property that fronts onto Highway 150. Duke is beginning a process to have the right-of-way abandoned in order to better secure facilities that are part of Marshall Steam Station operations. To accomplish this objective, the first step is to have the road removed from the State maintenance system. The next step would be to abandon the right-of-way and recombine the land so it will have legal access onto Highway 150.

Commissioner Dan Hunsucker made a motion to adopt the following resolution recommending the requested abandonment and forward the resolution to the NCDOT. Commissioner Beatty confirmed that while the Board makes this recommendation, the final decision on this abandonment is up to NCDOT.

RESOLUTION #2009 -

REQUESTING THE ABANDONMENT FROM STATE MAINTENANCE OF HARVEL ROAD (SR 1902)

WHEREAS, Duke Energy Carolina, LLC and Annie B. Stutts have petitioned the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) to abandon Secondary Road #1902, known locally as Harvel Road, from the State maintenance system.

WHEREAS, NCDOT has submitted to the Catawba County Board of Commissioners a request for a review and recommendation for the road abandonment; and

WHEREAS, staff has reviewed the request and has determined that no property owners would be adversely impacted or denied access;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Catawba County Board of Commissioners has reviewed this request and recommends to the North Carolina Board of Transportation for the abandonment SR 1902, known locally as Harvel Road.

Upon motion made by Commissioner _____, the above resolution was unanimously adopted by the Board of Commissioners of Catawba County on the ____ day of _____, 2009.

This the ____ day of _____, 2009.

B. Finance.

1. Finance Director Rodney Miller requested the Board approve resolutions adopted by each of the County's three public school systems authorizing the issuance of Qualified School Construction Bonds to take advantage of zero-interest funds available through Federal "stimulus" legislation for school construction projects. The American Recovery & Reinvestment Act of 2009 included \$11 billion for Qualified School Construction Bonds (QSCBs) in 2009 and 2010. In 2009, the US Treasury Department has allocated \$275,772,000 to North Carolina based on student population, relative wealth and other factors. Amounts for 2010 will be recalculated based on the usage in 2009.

The QSCB program offers federal income tax credits, at a level set by the Treasury Department, that are intended to allow the issuance of bonds without interest to willing financial institutions. The bonds may only be issued by local governments, which will then be responsible for repaying the principal amount. The maximum term for the bonds is twelve years. Bond proceeds must be used for construction, rehabilitation or repair of a public school or for land acquisition for such a facility. The bonds cannot be used for athletic stadiums or stand-alone buildings that are not used for the education of children, such as central office facilities. Applications for the bonds must be submitted to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction by July 31, 2009, and issued by December 31, 2009.

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For Catawba County, QSCB allocations for 2009 total as follows: Catawba County Schools, \$2,391,059; Hickory Public Schools, \$1,357,984; and Newton/Conover Schools, \$1,227,592 for a total of \$4,976,635.

In the current four-year construction cycle, Catawba County Schools will be renovating Arndt Middle School, which has an approved budget of \$4,251,000. For Newton-Conover Schools, a new middle school is planned on County Home Road at a cost estimated at \$21 million. Both of these projects are eligible for QSCB funding, which would allow the County and the school systems to take advantage of the zero interest costs afforded by the bonds, with the remaining amounts financed through traditional means. A new allocation of QSCB funds for 2010 could be available to further offset these cost. The school systems understand that these revenues do not increase the approved cost of the project. The benefit to taxpayers is the fact that the financing is interest free.

The Hickory Public School system has no projects remaining in the current four-year construction cycle. However, they have requested to advance funds from the next four-year cycle, beginning in Fiscal Year 2011-12, to complete a Hickory High School Project. Bids were received on the final phase of that project last year in the amount of \$1.9 million, but that cost is expected to decrease when it is re-bid this fall due to the current construction climate and the school system's commitment to bid the project with alternates so funding will be within the \$1.358 million allocation. The final amount approved for this project will be reduced from the next four-year construction cycle allocated to Hickory Public Schools.

In discussions following Mr. Miller's presentation, County Manager J. Thomas Lundy again clarified that Hickory Schools didn't have any project remaining in the current four-year cycle so they would advance funds from the next four-year cycle so they could take advantage of these funds. It was clarified that these dollars would now go toward the completion of the final outstanding aspects of the Hickory High project. It was confirmed that bond counsel was not needed in this bond process as this need would result in considerable expense and that the proposed construction schedule for using these bond funds was consistent with the construction schedule previously adopted by the Board. Commissioner Barger made a motion to approve the resolutions adopted by each of the three school systems authorizing the issuance of Qualified School Construction Bonds to take advantage of zero-interest funds available for school construction projects.

2. Finance Director Rodney Miller then presented an item that was not on the agenda but required prompt action to take advantage of funding available for two projects in the Utilities and Engineering Department. The deadline for the submission of applications for these funds is August 4, 2009. The funds are in the form of Clean Renewable Energy Bonds (CREB) and Qualified Energy Conservation Bonds (QECB) and could result in funds being lent at zero percent interest based on the interest shown by banks in the CREB/QECB bonds. The two projects slated for these funds are the Bio-Diesel Facility and the Bio-Energy Facility. Commissioner Hunsucker made a motion to proceed with the applications, authorizing the Finance Director, the County Manager and the Board Chair to sign the necessary documentation.

12. Other Items of Business:

County Emergency Services Director David Weldon advised the Board that Animal Services had received a grant through the PetFinder.Com Foundation for \$7500 which will be utilized for costs involved in testing and treating kennel cough, a disease which commonly occurs in kennels, vet boarding facilities and animal shelters. Petfinder.com is a free internet searchable database of animals in need of homes. It is also a directory of 12,500 animal shelters and adoption organizations across the USA, Canada, and Mexico. Catawba County Animal Services has been an active member since 2006. Each week the contact person is sent emails from the Petfinder.com Foundation with different news of events and statistics of how many "hits" each animal on their Petfinder site had. An email was sent concerning the effects of "Kennel Cough" in shelter environments and information concerning a grant the Foundation was awarding.

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Bordetella bronchiseptica, also known as “kennel cough” is a virus that spreads rapidly in large groups of animals. In a shelter environment, one animal can infect many, as the virus is airborne and is spread by the animal coughing or sneezing. As the virus is easily treatable, in a shelter environment treatment is not always feasible, as cost, time (usually treatment is 10 to 14 days) and space is a concern. Catawba County Animal Services is also working diligently to decrease citizens from adopting animals that have any type of disease, treatable or otherwise.

The \$7,500 grant Catawba County received is from the “Care and Feeding” Fund (this is within the Pefinder.com Foundation) which is made possible from individual donations and their relationship with the Animal Rescue site. The grant total came from the information Catawba County Animal Services provided on the application. Ultimately, the grant’s focus is to end euthanasia of adoptable animals from a disease as treatable as kennel cough. Animal Services will be reporting to the Petfinder.com Foundation via email regarding the outcome of the grants benefits for animals that were vaccinated against “kennel cough” as a result of this grant. This item was presented to the Board for information only and did not require action. Commissioner Beatty clarified that kennel cough occurs not only at animal shelters but in kennels and at vet facilities. She then thank Mr. Weldon for his efforts, along with his staff, in the success of the Aqua Palooza event and how it showcased the success of the 800mz radio system.

13. Attorneys’ Report: None.
14. Manager’s Report: None.
15. Adjournment: Chair Barnes adjourned the meeting at 10:25 a.m.

Katherine W. Barnes
Board of Commissioners

Barbara E. Morris
County Clerk